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ACCOUNT of a FISTULOUS OPENING in the STOMACH.
 By GEORGE BURROWES, M.D. M.R.I.A.

WOUNDS of the stomach, from its situation and the extent Read Jan. 7,
 it occupies in the abdomen, have been at all times so fre- 1792.
 quent, that their fatal tendencies are known to every person
 at all acquainted with the history of surgery. Several methods
 of lessening the danger of those wounds, or preventing their
 ill consequences, have been practised at different times with
 various success. The mode of uniting by *future* the divided
 part has been successfully employed in the * brute creation as
 well as the human; and there are a few cases in the annals of sur-
 gery of wounds in the stomach remaining unclosed externally for
 years without any *unremediable* inconvenience. Having lately had
 an opportunity of seeing a man who had been for many years
 in this predicament, and of examining the parts after death
 by dissection, I think it incumbent on me to lay before the Aca-
 demy some account of so extraordinary a case; not merely as
 a matter of curiosity, but as an additional proof that wounds

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* Philosoph. Transact.

in the stomach are not to be considered as desperate, even though they cannot be induced to heal.

THE relations of similar cases which are to be met with, though not of a modern date, are in authors of approved veracity; but indeed, had they been doubtful, the one which I now present to the Academy, and which is accompanied by the parts preserved, ascertains the possibility and supports their assertions. Schenkius, in his *Observ. Med. rario.* gives two such cases; and we are told in the fourth volume of the "Memoirs of the Academy of Surgery," that * Monsieur Foubert, a French surgeon of eminence, preserved in his museum the stomach of a man who died in the Hotel Dieu at Orleans, while he was a pupil there, which had an opening externally from a wound, and into which the person, while alive, used frequently to inject different aliments, and digested them as well as those taken by the mouth.— And Monsieur Covillard, a celebrated surgeon at Montélimard, in his "Observations Jatro-Chirurgiques," tells us, † "Qu'il fut prié de voir un soldat (en 1637) qui lui raconta avoir reçu une mousquetade en la partie supérieure et latérale de l'épigastre, laquelle pénétra fort avant dans le corps, lui causa des étranges symptômes, étant dans des perpétuelles pâmoissons, sans pouvoir être fortifié dans ses foiblesses, d'autant qu'à mesure qu'il avaloit du bouillon, il sortoit par la playe. — Il est vrai qu'après que les Chirurgiens lui eurent donné le moyen de retenir les alimens par l'application des tentes, " il

* Mem. de L'Academie Royale de Chirurgie, tom. IV. page 124.

† Observ. xli.

“ il reprit quelque vigueur, et par succession de temps il s'étoit
 “ remis en bon état ; mais on n'avoit jamais trouvé le moyen
 “ de fermer et de cicatriser sa playe, ce qui l'obligeoit à retenir
 “ sa nourriture avec une tente d'argent.

“ ALORS il nous montra un ulcère calleux et fistuleux ; en
 “ tirant sa tente d'argent, il sortit environ une écuelle de
 “ substance chyleuse à demi-cuite, ce qu'il arrêta en réappli-
 “ quant ladite tente. — Je l'ai fait voir à MM. les Médecins,
 “ lesquels ont été remplis d'étonnement qu'il se portât d'ailleurs
 “ si bien, ayant le visage et habitude du corps d'un homme
 “ jouissant d'une entière santé. Cependant ayant bû un verre
 “ de vin, eux présens, après avoir tiré sa tente, il l'a rendu
 “ par sa fistule.”

THE person whose case I relate was an inferior officer in the navy of the East India Company, son to a French refugee. This man, in a voyage to India, received a wound from a blunt-pointed wooden instrument in the abdomen, between the cartilage of the eighth rib, on the right side, and the umbilicus, penetrating the stomach ; much inflammation and fever followed the wound, and continued a very considerable time. When the inflammation subsided an opening remained, through which, when the *tent* was withdrawn, a fluid of a whitish colour flowed—the sides, instead of closing, turned in, and no union could, by any means, be induced. The man was therefore advised to keep the opening constantly plugged up; this he did for the remainder of his life, never withdrawing the plug but to gratify curiosity or replace it with a

new one. The opening was about the third of an inch in diameter. The plug he used was generally cotton wick twisted hard.---It was twenty-seven years from the time he received the injury to that in which I saw him first (about fourteen months ago); he had then attained his sixty-fifth year, and was, to all appearance, a healthy man, regular in his bowels and all his secretions. He had been extremely drunken and dissipated, and was, even at that time, frequently intoxicated with every kind of fermented liquor; yet he never complained of any inconvenience from it, but returned the next day to occupation or debauch with vivacity and with strength. He had procured a livelihood for a few years before I met with him by teaching French in this city, being too old for his former occupation.—I think it necessary to add, that in a voyage subsequent to that in which he received the wound, he was severely afflicted with scurvy, in common with several others in the ship, and in consequence of that disease lost every tooth in his head. All the alviolar processes were absorbed, notwithstanding which he contrived to break his food, his gums being very much hardened, and eat with considerable appetite and a good digestion.

ON removing the plug, after taking milk, a part of it, quite pure, escaped through the opening; and he has told me that when his stomach was empty of meat, and that he has taken the plug out, a whitish fluid adhered to it that tasted sweet. He never felt any pain in the opening, nor inconvenience from any particular food.

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THIS extraordinary being, after remaining the winter of last year in the House of Industry, whither want, produced by drunkenness, compelled him, quitted that asylum, tired of the regularity (though not very rigid) which was there exacted, and went to the country; but he was forced to return to us at the end of autumn, extremely debilitated, having suffered much from hardship and intemperance. From this time he gradually declined, his appetite continuing tolerably good, but his bowels weak, till he died, which happened about six weeks after his return.

ON examining the body after death, the wound was found to penetrate the stomach in the centre of the greater curvature, and from the adhesions of the liver, colon and integuments, a very considerable stricture was formed, so as to give the stomach the appearance of a double bag, with the opening in the middle; the duodenum was enlarged beyond the size of the colon, and seems to have in some measure performed the functions of a second stomach. The colon was firmly attached to the lower part of the stomach by a ligamentous substance, that must have been formed by the inflammation subsequent to the wound. All the other viscera were found and perfectly natural, both in appearance and situation.

I CANNOT conclude the history of this extraordinary case, without regretting my having been prevented from rendering it more subservient to medical purposes by the man's suddenly departing

departing from the Hospital without my knowledge, and returning in so debilitated a state, as such an opportunity of exposing aliments to the action of the succus gastricus *alone*, of ascertaining the effects of several medicines when confined to the stomach, and of making experiments on narcotics, I can hardly again expect or hope to meet.